




El Pou, la Balsa y la Cisterna

Well, irrigation pond and cistern

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“El Pou, la Balsa y la Cisterna” - Well, irrigation pond and cistern

In the place now occupied by a school, until the late 1950s there was, what was known as “*Bassa dels Ferros*”, a large open-air irrigation pond probably of Andalusian origin: it collected water from the “*Font de Sant Josep*” (Saint Joseph's Spring) and supplied irrigation water to the “*Horta del Poble de Baix*” (Orchard of the Lower settlement), as well as to move several mills.

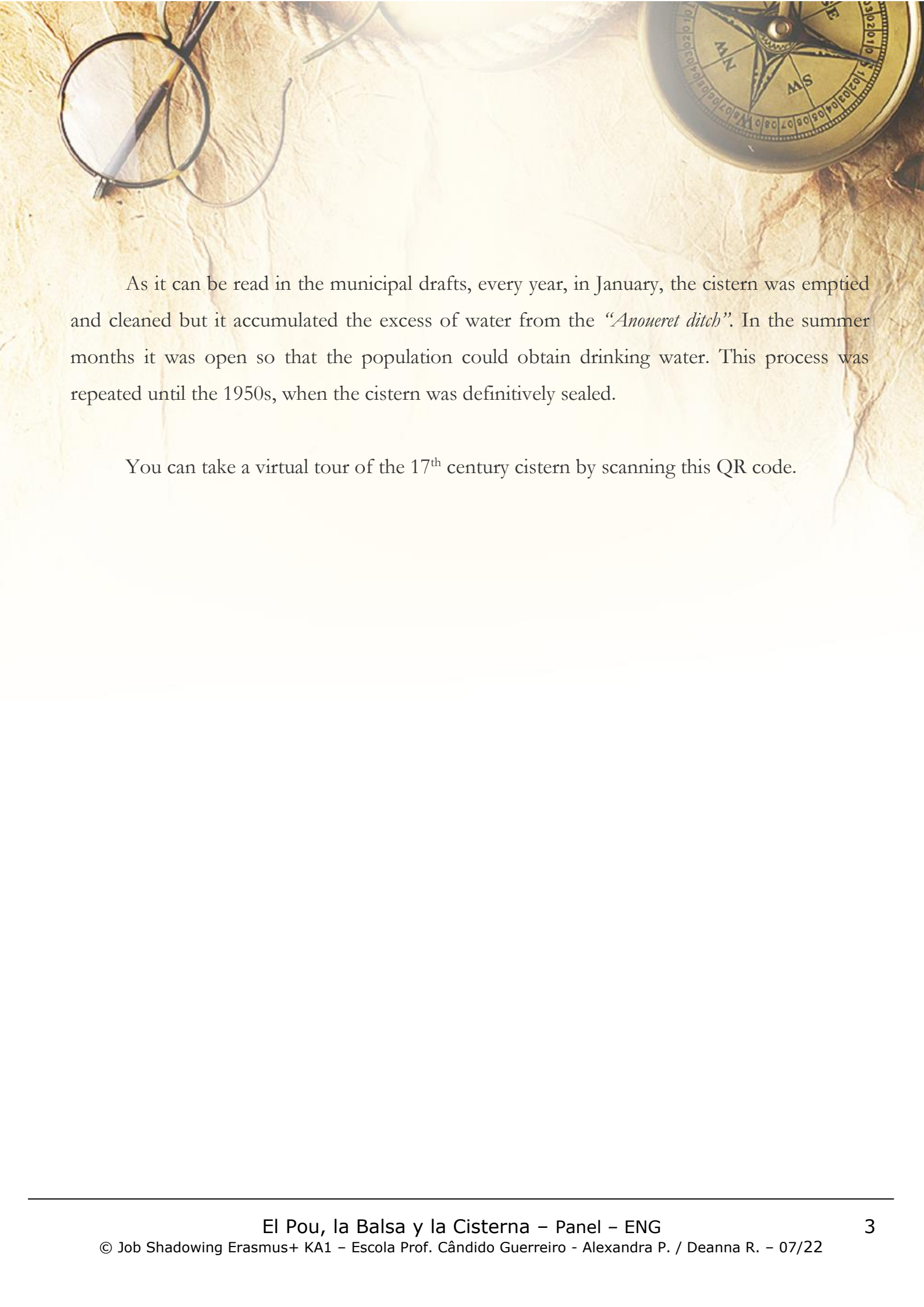
When the Civil War ended, the irrigation pond was emptied and a provisional concentration camp for the Franco army was installed there. Hundreds of soldiers from the Army of the 2nd Spanish Republic were stationed here, in terrible survival conditions.

The “*Assumption's Cistern*” dates back to 1679. It is an important hydraulic work that was built to store water that came from the “*Font de l'Anoueret*” (Anoueret Spring) and that supplied drinking water to the to the “*Poble de Baix*” (Lower settlement).

The urban area occupied by the cistern was between the agricultural farms of “*Benissabat*” and “*Seneta*”. In this area was located the “*Hort del Duc*” (Duke's orchard), a closed orchard, owned by the Duke of Segorbe, where oranges and lemons were grown in the 16th century and which included a leisure house.

From the 17th century onwards, due to urban growth, it was necessary to find other resources for the water supply, especially in this area, which was at the end of the agricultural farm of “*Saint Joseph*”. In 1671, the water from the “*Font de l'Anoueret*” (Anoueret Spring) was channelled to this place and in 1679 the present cistern was built. For the construction of the cistern, more than 1000 m³ of land were removed. The cistern was built with four thick masonry walls, coated on the inside with a reddish waterproof hydraulic plaster. It is covered by a cradle vault over transversal limestone arches.

The water was extracted through a fountain located on the outside of the cistern, which was accessed by descending a steep staircase. In 1897 the staircase was closed and a well was opened which became the supply point.



As it can be read in the municipal drafts, every year, in January, the cistern was emptied and cleaned but it accumulated the excess of water from the “*Anoueret ditch*”. In the summer months it was open so that the population could obtain drinking water. This process was repeated until the 1950s, when the cistern was definitively sealed.

You can take a virtual tour of the 17th century cistern by scanning this QR code.